

# INSCRIPTION Guildhall, 18th July, 1919

"Presented by the Corporation of the City of London to General John J. Pershing, G. C. B., Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditoinary Forces, in testimony of its high appreciation of the valuable services rendered by him, and the Troops under his command in the cause of Freedom in the Great War just concluded."

Bell

HIGHLIGHTS OF PERSHING'S MILITARY CAREER

1886 Graduated from West Point, ranking thirtieth in a class of seventy-seven. Commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Cavalry and assigned to the Sixth Cavalry at Fort Baynard, New Mexico, where he served in the campaigns against the dissident Apache Indians led by Chief Geronimo.

1891 Sent with the Sixth Cavalry to fight in the Sioux Campaign on the Dakota-Nebraska border. (It was in this campaign that Chief Sitting Bull was killed. Later that year he became Professor of Military Science and Tactics at University of Nebraska. The Battalion at the University was later called the Pershing Rifles and has since developed into a nationwide organization.)

1895 Left the University of Nebraska after having been admitted to the Bar of the State of Nebraska. Assigned to the Tenth (Negro) Cavalry in Montana.

1897 Assigned to West Point as assistant instructor. Given the name "Black Jack" by cadets because of his service with the Tenth Cavalry.

1898 Fought in the Battle of San Juan Hill with the Tenth Cavalry (Spanish-American War).

1899 Organized the Bureau of Insular Affairs and chief thereof.

1900 Assigned to the Philippines in the campaign to subdue and pacify the Moros.

1905 Met and married Frances Warren, daughter of the U.S. Senator from Wyoming. Left at once for Japan where he served as an observer in the Russo-Japanese War. (First child, Helen, born in Tokyo in 1906; second child, Anne, born in Philippines in 1908; son, Francis Warren born in Wyoming in 1909; and daughter, Margaret, in the Philippines in 1912.)

1906 Promoted from Captain to Brigadier General by President Theodore Rossevelt. Advanced four grades over 862 senior officers creating furor. Returned to the Philippines to command a brigade at Fort McKinley on Luzon.

1914 Took command of the Eighth Brigade on the Mexican border.

1915 Death of Mrs. Pershing, Helen, Anne, and Margaret in a fire at the Presidio in California.

1915 Mexican Campaign against the band gang of Pancho 1916 Villa.

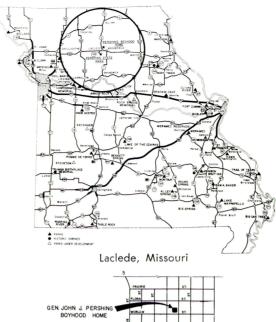
1917 Made Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I. Sailed for France.
 1919 Named General of the Armies of the United States

by Special Act of Congress.

1924 Honorably retired from active service in the Army.

a Principle Fettred from active service in the Army.

B Died at Walter Reed Army Hospital on July 15. Buried in Arlington National Cemetery with all the honors due the General of the Armies of the United States of America.





## PERSHING MEMORIAL STATE PARK

Two miles west of Laclede in the beautiful green hills of north Missouri is Pershing Memorial State Park. Locust Creek divides the park with the picturesque heavily wooded rolling hills on the east and a flat valley on the west. The old swimming hole of the boys of the area around Laclede, including young John Pershing, was on Locust Creek in the park. Excellent picnicking facilities with tables and ovens, tent and trailer camping, organized group camping and nature trails are available.

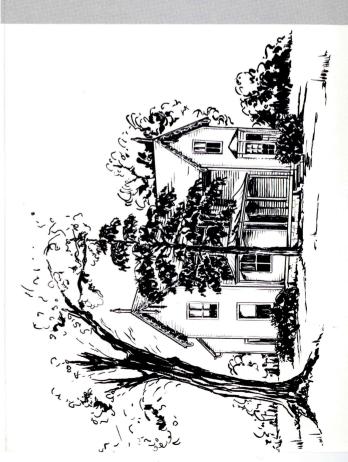
For Information Regarding Other Historic Sites & State Parks,

MISSOURI STATE PARK BOARD
P. O. Box 176

Jefferson City, Mo. 65101

# JOHN J. PERSHING BOYHOOD HOME

LACLEDE, MISSOURI



### JOHN JOSEPH PERSHING IN LACLEDE

John Joseph Pershing, Commander in Chief of the American Expeditionary Forces in Europe during World War I and named General of the Armies by Special Act of Congress in 1919, was born on September 13, 1860, in a small section house of the old Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad near Laclede, Missouri.

Pershing's father was John Fletcher Pershing. a fourth generation American of German-Alsatian ancestry. He was born in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, on March 1, 1834. He remained in Westmoreland County until 1858, when at twentythree, he set out for the West working his way to Missouri on flatboats.

In February, 1858, John Fletcher Pershing arrived in St. Louis. He went to work on the railroads, first as a partner in the subcontracting firm of Stone, Pershing, and Jennings, helping to build a track from St. Louis to Macon, Missouri. He later took a job as the foreman of a track-laying section on the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad.

In 1859, he married Ann Elizabeth Thompson who lived with her parents, James and Polly Thompson, on a farm near Warrenton, Missouri. The Thompson family, of Anglo-Saxon ancestry, was of old Virginia stock, having moved westward after the American Revolution. Ann was born near Maryville, Tennessee, on February 15, 1835.

After their marriage, John F. and Ann Pershing moved to Laclede, in Linn County, and lived for a while in the section house on the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad, now part of the Burlington Railroad.

John J. Pershing was the first of nine children born to John Fletcher and Ann Pershing. Of the nine children, six survived - three boys and three girls. Shortly after young John was born, the family moved to a house in the town of Laclede. His father then began to rise to prominence in the affairs of Laclede, buying the general store, becoming postmaster of the town and captain of the home guard, and taking an active part in church affairs.

On June 18, 1864, three-year-old John J. Pershing encountered the violence of war for the first time. A band of Confederate irregulars attacked Laclede directing their terrorism at the pro-Union citizens of the town. John Fletcher Pershing was a staunch Union sympathizer. In the attack, several men of the town were killed, but the Pershing family escaped injury although the family's



general store was looted.

There was very little in John J. Pershing's early life to suggest that he would one day lead a victorious army in the greatest war the world had ever known. His was the usual boyhood of fishing, fighting (at which he was evidently guite good), and mischief. However, fishing, fighting, and mischief did not take up all of his time as a boy. The Pershing children were expected to be industrious in both their studies and their chores.

Young John was introduced to the strenuous manual labor of farming early in his life. After the Civil War, Pershing's father bought a lumber vard and two 160-acre farms in addition to the general store he already owned. Also, in the fall of 1886, he bought the home (now restored) and moved his family into it. Young John, aged 6, was expected to help with the farming - first pulling weeds and other small jobs and gradually. as he became older, working at the bigger jobs such as helping with the planting and harvesting, milking, and even breaking colts.

The farming experience that Pershing acquired stood the family in good stead a few years later. With the panic of 1873, the John F. Pershings lost all of their holdings except for the home and one of the farms. In order to supplement the family income, Pershing's father went to work for a St. Joseph clothing company as a traveling salesman. His absence placed the responsibility of tending to the farm on his two oldest sons. John J. and James. Young John worked on the farm while he completed his education, consistently ranking at the top of his class.

While completing his secondary education, John acquired a desire to attend college and become a lawyer. He knew, however, that he would have to find some way to finance his own education

now that the family had lost most of its wealth. The opportunity came with a teaching position at Prairie Mound School, nine miles south of Laclede, in Chariton County. Pershing taught school at Prairie Mound at various times during 1879 and 1881 at \$35 a month. He earned enough money to attend Kirksville Normal School (now Northeast Missouri State Teachers College) in between teaching jobs. He began a course of study leading to a degree in Scientific Didactics (a course in education) in February, 1879. He completed the requirements in June, 1880, and returned to his teaching position at Prairie Mound.

In the fall of 1881, Pershing returned to Kirksville to continue his education with the eventual goal of becoming a lawyer. It was at this time that the thought of service to his country first entered his mind. He saw a newspaper ad concerning the competitive examination for entrance to the United States Military Academy at West Point. He decided it was a chance for a free education and so he took the test on October 20, 1881. He qualified and was nominated to the Academy. He entered an Academy preparatory school under the direction of Caleb Huse in Highland Falls, New York, in early 1882. In July of 1882, he reported to West Point as a "plebe" or freshman.

### SOME FACTS ABOUT THE HOME

Indications are that the Pershing Boyhood Home was built in 1857, two years after the town of Laclede, Missouri was founded.

The Pershing family acquired the property in 1866 when the future general was a boy of six, and made it their home at least until the time John J. was appointed to West Point in 1882. Some time after 1882, the family moved from laclede and two other families lived in the house until it was purchased and presented to the State of Missouri in

The home has been restored by the Missouri State Park Board. It is furnished of the period of occupancy by the Pershing family.

On September 13, 1960, as a part of the nationwide celebration to honor General Pershing, the home was dedicated as a public shrine to the memory of Pershing and the soldiers who fought under him in World War I when he was Commander in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Forces.

This home is open to the public daily, except Mondays, New Year's, Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas Days, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Sunday hours, Memorial Day through Labor Day are from 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. The charges are: Age 6-12, 25c - Over, 50c.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 1. Goodwin, Early Life of Pershing
- 2. McAdam, George, Life of General Pershing
- 3. O'Connor, Richard, Black Jack Pershing
- 4. Palmer, Fredericn, John J. Pershing General of the Armies. A Biography, 1948.
- 5. Pershing, John J., My Experiences in the World War.
- 6. Smythe, Donald, Missouri Historical Review "The Early Years of John J. Pershing, 1860-1882." 1963. October.
- 7. Cover Drawing, Mary Ann Hall (Copyrighted)